

State Instructional Materials Commission

Report on Repeal of UCA 53A-14

June 2010 Interim Committee



Prepared by the

Utah State Office of Education
Law and Legislation Services

June 6, 2010

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(This Report was reviewed by the State Board of Education on June 4,
2010.)

State Instructional Materials Commission

Overview

The State Instructional Materials Commission, previously known as the State Textbook Commission, was created in 2001 by Senate Bill 7 sponsored by Senator David Steele with Senators Stephenson, Hale, and Allen as co-sponsors. S.B. 7 (2001) changed the name of the Commission, expanded the role of the Commission, and extended the repeal date to July 1, 2011. Utah Code 53A-14 - State Instructional Materials Commission and Utah State Board of Education Rule R277-469 - Instructional Materials Commission Operating Procedures provide excellent and comprehensive direction for the Commission.

The major role of the Commission has historically been to make recommendations to the State Board of Education concerning instructional materials to be approved by the Board for use in public schools in Utah. Incorporating the use of hundreds of hours of volunteer teachers and curriculum experts, minimal USOE staff, and the expertise and experience of the Commission, hundreds of pieces of newly submitted instructional materials are reviewed annually for appropriateness, content alignment with the State Core, correct reading level, appeal, durability, etc. Initial reviews are conducted by volunteer teams of content experts (teachers and curriculum specialists) with an additional review by members of the Commission prior to making recommendations to the State Board.

Commission Membership

As per 53A-14-101 Commission members include:

- The State Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee;
- A school district superintendent;
- A secondary principal;
- An elementary principal;
- A secondary teacher;
- An elementary teacher;
- Five persons not employed in public education (lay citizens);
and,

- A dean of a school of education of a state college or university.

Commission Duties

The Commission meets at least twice annually and reviews the work and recommendations of the subject specific volunteer committees. The Commission then makes recommendations to the State Board on whether or not materials should be adopted and adoption category. Adoption categories include: (a) primary (general classroom use); (b) limited (used only in specific situations); (c) teacher resource; (d) student resources; and, (e) not recommended. School districts may not purchase materials for primary instructional purposed unless those materials have been adopted as "primary" by the State Board.

The Commission also approves the information and data included in the Instructional Materials Center's website and database. This includes the frequently used Recommended Instructional Materials (RIMs) searchable database where teachers and other interested individuals may find information concerning textbooks and other instructional materials. Using RIMs, one can easily find if a textbook has been approved by the State Board of Education, where to order the textbook, and the State adopted price for the book. RIMs is a valuable tool for educators in Utah's school districts and charter schools.

Changes to UCA 53A-14 - State Instructional Materials Commission

Several changes have been made in 53A-14 since the major changes incorporated in S.B. 7 in 2001. These changes have modified the functions of the Instructional Materials Commission, added independent reviews, and expanded Commission responsibilities. Legislative changes over the past ten years include:

2002 - S.B. 99S1	Gladwell	no compensation for Commission members
2003 - S.B. 154S5	Hatch	referenced Commission functions
2004 - H.B 22S1	Christensen	commission function in civics education
2007 H.B. 364S1	Froerer	independent evaluations of materials
2008 S.B. 02S2	Stephenson	independent evaluation changes
2009 H.B. 296S1	Sumsion	Commission role with USDB referenced
2010 H.B. 166	Dougall	suspend requirement for independent

evaluations until 2012-2013 school
year

Summary

The State Instructional Materials Commission continues to provide critical services valued by educators in Utah's district and charter schools. Utah Code 53A-14 - State Instructional Materials Commission facilitates:

1. Ongoing review and recommendation of instructional materials to the State Board;
2. Approval of instructional materials by the State Board;
3. Oversight and distribution of independent evaluations;
4. Provision of valuable information to those purchasing materials (RIMS); and,
5. Opportunities for teachers and curriculum specialists to annually review published instructional materials.

Recommendation

It is the recommendation of the Utah State Office of Education that the repeal dates found in Utah Code 63-55-253(2) be removed and that the State Instructional Materials Commission continue to function as outlined in Utah Code 53A-14 without a repeal date. The State Office of Education also welcomes ongoing amendments that clarify and update this section of the Utah Code.